

Message Text

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73

ACTION SCI-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 IO-14 ISO-00 ACDA-19 CIAE-00 INR-11

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 RSC-01 FEA-02 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

PA-04 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 SAJ-01 EB-11 COME-00

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P R 302130Z JUL 74

FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4111

INFO USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION IAEA VIENNA

USAEC GERMANTOWN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL MONTREAL

C O N F I D E N T I A L OTTAWA 2400

NOFORN

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: TECH, TGEN, CA, FR

SUBJECT: FRANCO-CANADIAN URANIUM ENRICHMENT COOPERATION

REF: PARIS 18265

1. THROUGH SENIOR CONTACTS IN MINISTRY OF ENERGY, MINES AND RESOURCES (EM&R) AND ATOMIC ENERGY CONTROL BOARD (AECB) (ESSENTIAL THAT THESE SOURCES BE FULLY PROTECTED), EMBASSY CAN REPORT FOLLOWING PRELIMINARY REACTION OF SENIOR GOC OFFICIALS TO ANNOUNCEMENT OF FRANCO-CANADIAN COOPERATION IN URANIUM ENRICHMENT:

A. MACNABB, DEPUTY MIN, EM&R, AND RUNNALS, SENIOR URANIUM ADVISOR MET WITH MINISTER MACDONALD IN WHAT WAS REPORTEDLY PROTRACTED MEETING, AFTERNOON OF JULY 29. ACCORDING TO PARTICIPANT IN MEETING, MACDONALD WAS NOT REPEAT NOT SURPROSED AT ANNOUNCEMENT CONFIDENTIAL

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JULY 26 FOR REASONS OUTLINED IN SUCCEEDING PARAS. HE VOICED

"CONTINUING SERIOUS CONCERN" OVER SO LARGE A FRENCH INVESTMENT
IN QUEBEC AND ALSO CONCERN ABOUT THE POLITICAL PROBLEMS
WHICH WOULD BE INVOLVED IN ANY GOC INTERVENTION TO STOP THE
PROJECT FROM GOING FORWARD IN THE EVENT THAT RESULTS OF THE
FEASIBILITY STUDY ARE FAVORABLE AS ANTICIPATED. THE MINISTER
ALSO DIRECTED THAT AECB, WHICH MUST MAKE THE FINAL DETERMINATION
WHICH WOULD PERMIT A PROJECT OF THIS TYPE TO GO FORWARD,
EXPLICITLY AND RIGOROUSLY APPLY IN ITS EVALUATION THE
MINISTERIAL CRITERIA LAID DOWN IN HIS PRESS RELEASE OF AUGUST 1,
1973.

B. LAST FALL, GIRAUD, CEA ADMINISTRATOR, PAID COURTESY CALL
ON MACDONALD AFTER PROTRACTED NEGOTIATIONS WITH BOURASSA, PERRIER
OF QUEBEC, AND OTHER PROVINCIAL OFFICIALS. DURING THIS CALL, WHICH
REPORTEDLY IRRITATED MACDONALD BECAUSE GIRAUD HAD FIRST APPROACHED
QUEBEC OFFICIALS RATHER THAN FEDERAL OFFICIALS, GIRAUD INFORMED
MACDONALD AS FOLLOWS: (1) AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE HAD BEEN
REACHED BETWEEN HIMSELF AND BOURASSA AND ALL THAT REMAINED WAS
FOR "TECHNICIANS" TO DRAFT THE NECESSARY LANGUAGE FOR THE AGREEMENT.
(2) ACCORDING TO GIRAUD, THERE WAS A "WINDOW" OPEN WHICH IF
PROMPTLY EXPLOITED WOULD PERMIT EUROPE UNDER FRENCH LEADERSHIP
TO BREAK LONGSTANDING US SUPPLY MONOPOLY IN ENRICHED URANIUM
FIELD. ACCORDING TO OUR INFORMANTS, GIRAUD DWELLED AT GREAT
LENGTH ON THIS ASPECT OF THE ENRICHED URANIUM SUPPLY PROBLEM
TO THE IRRIGATION OF BOTH MACDONALD AND HIS STAFF. APPARENTLY
IT WAS SHORTLY AFTER THIS GIRAUD/MACDONALD MEETING THAT STAFF
MEMBERS AT EM&R ENCOURAGED BRINCO TO ATTEMPT TO BREAK THE
DEADLOCK WHICH HAD DEVELOPED IN ITS APPROACHES TO U.S. AEC.
RESULT WAS CANADIAN AIDE-MEMOIRE TO WHICH DEPT REPLIED JULY 26.
(3) SUBSEQUENT DISCUSSION BETWEEN OFFICIALS OF EM&R AND CEA LEND
CREDENCE TO PRESS STORIES BEING CARRIED PRINCIPALLY IN MONTREAL
PAPERS, E.G., LEDEVOIR, THAT PLANT WILL BE INITIALLY SIZED FOR
9,000 UNITS OF SEPARATIVE WORK WITH PROVISION FOR SUBSEQUENT
DOUBLING. TARGET DATE FOR FINISHED FEASIBILITY STUDY IS DEC. 1974
WITH SUBSEQUENT TARGET DATE TO PRESENT FIRM PROPOSAL FOR PLANT
TO GOC FOR APPROVAL "WITHIN THREE MONTHS". REASON THAT SUCH A
SHORT TIME-SCALE HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED APPEARS TO BE THAT CEA
ENGINEERS HAVE BEEN DOING NECESSARY TECHNICAL BACKGROUND
PREPARATION FOR AT LEAST A YEAR AND POSSIBLY AS MUCH AS TWO YEARS.

C. EM&R HAS RECEIVED CONFIDENTIAL INVITATION FOR GOC OFFICIALS
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AT WHATEVER LEVELS DESIRED BY GOC TO VISIT EXISTING FRENCH
GASEOUS DIFFUSION PLANT IN ORDER FOR THEM TO OBTAIN WHATEVER
INFORMATION THEY FEEL THEY WOULD NEED TO EXPEDITIOUSLY PROCESS
FINAL PROPOSAL WHEN IT IS PRESENTED.
PORTER

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